

Keith on the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals; former Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm; Lani Guinier, the first African American woman to receive a tenured professorship at Harvard Law School; and Jocelyn Benson, the Dean of Wayne State University Law School, which is home to the Damon J. Keith Center for Civil Rights and the Damon J. Keith Collection of African American Legal History.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps the most quoted line of all of Judge Keith's decisions came from *Detroit Free Press v. Ashcroft*, in which he wrote that "Democracy dies behind closed doors." Judge Keith has devoted his life to opening doors for all in society, and indeed in ensuring that all who serve in government are accountable to the principles upon which our nation was founded, and which have been enhanced and enriched over time. I encourage my colleagues to join me in thanking Judge Damon J. Keith for his truly excellent and inspirational service to our nation.

IN OPPOSITION TO H.R. 2685, THE
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AP-
PROPRIATION FOR FISCAL YEAR
2016

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 2015

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 2685, the FY16 Department of Defense Appropriations Bill.

While I commend the House Appropriations Committee's support for our servicemembers and our national defense, I have serious concerns about the way this bill funds our military operations. As was the case with last month's National Defense Authorization Act, this appropriations bill uses the Overseas Contingency Operations budget as a backdoor loophole to get around sequestration by funding \$38 billion of the Pentagon's regular base budget activities with war funds—a blatant abuse of the budget process. Just last year, House Republicans criticized the abuse of the OCO loophole in their budget report, stating that it "undermines the integrity of the budget process" and that the Budget Committee would "oppose increases above the levels the Administration and our military commanders say are needed to carry out operations unless it can be clearly demonstrated that such amounts are war-related."

Moreover, in following the strategy of the Republican budget, this legislation begins the process of locking in sequestration for non-defense programs, which will have a devastating impact on investments critical to the nation. We need to get back to the table to have an honest debate about our budget and renegotiate the funding caps for both defense and nondefense. Only then will we be able to provide the necessary resources for our national security needs and to ensure we keep the nation's commitments to education, research, infrastructure, and other crucial drivers of economic prosperity.

I also have serious concerns with a number of other provisions contained in this legislation. I strongly object to a measure which provides \$600 million to train and equip the so-called "moderate" Syrian rebels. As I have urged repeatedly, this initiative could have unintended

negative consequences that will not serve our ultimate goal of defeating ISIS. Unfortunately, an amendment offered to strip this funding was not adopted.

I strongly oppose sections 8100, 8101, and 8102 of this bill, which prohibit funding for the transfer of Guantanamo Bay detainees to both the United States and abroad. While we must pursue and prosecute terrorists that seek to do us harm, this facility—and the conduct within its walls—have only served to hurt our nation in the eyes of the world. It is simply un-American to hold individuals without charging them for a crime. I was disappointed that amendments offered by Congressman NADLER to strike these sections from the legislation were defeated. I also object to the inclusion of unrequested funding for many weapons systems, including \$1 billion for additional Army vehicles and weapons systems that the Pentagon said was not necessary.

I appreciate that this bill contains a Sense of Congress stating that this body has a Constitutional duty to debate and decide when to authorize the use of military force in the fight against ISIL. I support many aspects of the military operations the President is currently conducting against ISIL, including the use of American air power against ISIL targets and in support of Iraqi and Kurdish forces, as well as the deployment of limited numbers of American troops to help train and equip those forces. However, it has now been ten months since the President sent troops into Iraq and Syria and four months since the President sent Congress a proposed AUMF to combat ISIL. The President himself said he wanted to revise and ultimately repeal both the 2001 AUMF and 2002 AUMF yet we continue to rely on them as justification for our ongoing military operations. We owe it to our troops and the American people to pass a narrowly tailored AUMF that provides the authority necessary to degrade and defeat ISIL without dragging the United States into another unnecessary ground war in the Middle East.

For those reasons, I was disappointed that two amendments offered by Congresswoman LEE to sunset the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force Against and Al-Qaeda and associated forces and the 2002 Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq were not adopted. In addition, an amendment offered by Congressman SCHIFF to prohibit the use of funds for Operation Inherent Resolve in the absence of an AUMF to combat ISIL after March 31, 2016 was defeated.

Despite my opposition to the overall legislation, I was pleased that a bipartisan amendment introduced by Rep. MASSIE and Rep. LOFGREN to limit funding for many backdoor programs within Section 702 of the FISA Amendments Act passed. I also support the increased 2.3 percent pay raise for our troops and their families. Finally, I support the inclusion of full funding of the President's request for U.S.-Israel Iron Dome missile defense program.

While this bill does provide much needed funding for programs that benefit our men and women in uniform, ultimately, it falls short in too many areas. It is my hope that many of my objections will be resolved in Conference with the Senate but I can't support it in its current form.

TRIBUTE TO MARY HILL AND
EREN SAGUN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Mary Hill and Eren Sagun from Des Moines Roosevelt High School for winning the Class 2A Girls Tennis Doubles title.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by these students demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. I am honored to represent them and their families in the United States Congress. I know all of my colleagues in the House join me in congratulating Mary and Eren on competing in this rigorous competition and wishing continued success in their education and high school tennis career.

REMEMBERING THE SOUTH CAROLINA
SHOOTING AND REMOVAL
OF THE CONFEDERATE FLAG

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise to speak out against the senseless loss of innocent lives resulting from another senseless act of violence.

My thoughts and prayers go out to the people of Charleston, South Carolina, the members of the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, pastored by the Rev. Clementa Pinckney, who was one of nine persons slain by a gunman motivated by hate.

Although tragedy has found its way into the lives of the individuals murdered and the lives of their families there has been some good found in this tragic loss.

Mr. Speaker, the legislature of South Carolina has decided to debate whether to remove the flag from the front of the State House building after public support from prominent legislators, community organizations, and the Governor of South Carolina have called for the flag to come down now.

When considering the removal of the flag the people must remember the nine lives that were lost due to senseless, insensitive, and hateful feelings that were influenced by the traditions represented by the Confederate flag.

The Confederate flag has been used as a symbol of hate, exclusion, and a brutally offensive past.

South Carolina should follow in the footsteps of Texas which refused to authorize license plates with the confederate flag on them, a decision upheld last week by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Mr. Speaker, Wal Mart, Amazon, Sears, and eBay all have made a decision to stop selling Confederate flag merchandise.

The Confederate flag does not represent the future of our great country.

We must embrace a spirit of inclusion and goodwill with a mission to eradicate hate and ignorance.

We can no longer allow our past to dictate our future, and must use this tragedy as an opportunity to eliminate symbols of hate that permeate through our society.